

Research Paper

Historical Importance of Purandar Taluka of Pune District.

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ABSTRACT

It is well said that – each of soil of Purandar has historical chapter. From ancient period Purandar has different importance. In the ancient period Rashtrakuta, Chalukya and Yadava built very attractive historical temple around Purandar, Sangmeshwar temple, Changavateshwar temple, Narayaneswar temple, Bhuleshwar temple, Pandeshwar temple, Siddheshwar temple and Khandoba temple etc.

Purandar taluka has played significant role in Maratha history. Various historical events happened on this soil. In the Maratha period Purandar fort was main center, it's famous for Purandar treaty which was signed by Shivaji and Mirza Raja Jai Singh. The first Peshwa (Prime Minister) Balaji Vishwanath was lived here long time; he died in Saswad his 'Samadhi' is on the confluence of the Karha and Chambli river. Great Revolutionary 'Krantiveer' Umaji Naik was revolted against British power in Purandar.

The memorial of Baji Pasalkar, the earliest among the long list of martyrs who gave up their lives for 'Swarajya'. He was Vatanadar of Mose valley adjoining Varasgaon dam. At the front in the battle for central of the Purandar Khalad and Belsar battle, seventy Year old veteran Baji Pasalkar died in battle at Saswad on Aug. 1648.

Malhargad (Sonari Fort) is very closed to Saswad at Soneri village. The

last fort to be built by the Marathas. Native place of Sardar Panse, the

general of the Maratha army, Jadhavgad very famous historical

fortress built in 1710 at Jadhavwadi by Pelaji Jadhavrao Gallant Maratha

Sardar in Maratha period. The fort was built over of peri constructed

bearing its defense systems and residential use in Purandar fortress is

historical pride of Purandar taluka. Purandar fort is about 40 km south

east of Pune and 10 km south-west of Saswad (Taluka Place). Preched

on gigantic mountain mass, the height above sea-level is 1398 meters

and about 700 meters above the plain at foot. In really comprise to

fortresses; Purandar the stronger and more Important of the two and

Vajragad small sister fort situated on a ridge running out east of it.

Purandar has two part; the upper or Balekilla with precipitous side all

around the lower part of machi about 300 meters above the

plain on the north side of the lower part there is a broad terrace compressing the cantonment area of the fortification. There are many monuments old and new on the terrace.

Towards the east of the terrace, beyond a narrow ridge; lies the fort of

Vajragad also called Rudramal. The approach is commanded by Delhi

Darwaza, the main gate. The most important monument on the summit

on the hill is the old temple Kedareshwar.

The history of Purandar fort goes back to 13th century. The Bahamani Sultan in the 14th century built here some walls and bastions from 1484 AD, for about hundred years the fort remained in the hands of Nizamshahi ruler. In 1596 AD, the fort was given as a Jagir of Maloji Bhosale grand father of Shivaji. However, Shivaji had struggle very hard to establish his control over the fort in 1646 AD. In 1665 AD, Purandar was besieged by Mughal forces under the Commander of Mirza Raja Jai Singh and Dillir Khan. In the ensuing battle Murar Baji the gallant commander of the fort was killed. Shivaji under a treaty had to surrender to the Mughal.

Treaty Of Purandar (1665) :

The treaty of Purandar was signed on Jun, 1665 between the Rajput ruler Jai Singh, who was commander of Mughal empire and Maratha Chhatrapati Shivaji was forced to Sign the agreement after Jai Singh be signed Purander fort.

When Shivaji realized that war with Mughal empire would only cause damage to empire and that his men would suffer heavy losses, he choose to make a treaty instead of living his men under the Mughals.

Following the Main Points of the Treaty :

1. Shivaji kept twelve forts, along with an area worth an income of 1 Lakh huns.

2. Shivaji was required to help the Mughals whenever and wherever required.

3. Shivajis son Sambhaji was tasked the commander of 5000 strong force under the Mughals.

4. If Shivaji wanted to claim the Konkan area under Vijapur control, he would have to pay Rs. 40 Lakh huns to the

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Mughals.

5. He had give up his fort at Purandar, Rudramal, Kondhana, Khandagala, Lohgad, Isagad, Tung –Tikana, Rohida, Nardurga, Mahuli, Bhandardurga, Palaskhol, Rajgad, Bhaktgad, Manikgad, Swaroopgad, Sarkargad, Marakgad, Ankola and Maangad. Along with these requirement, Shivaji agreed to meet Aurongzeb for the further political talk.

Puranadar fort was recaptured by Shivaji in 1670 AD later it became a favourite retreat of the Peshwa. Purandar a birth place of Chhatrapati Sambhaji and Peshwa Sawai Madhavrao. Purandar captured by British in 1818. During the Second World War, the British kept here the German Prisoners.

Achievement of Murar Bhaji Deshpande in the Battle of Purandar :

Murar Baji Deshpande was a general in the early Maratha Empire during reign of Shivaji. He is best remembered for his defence of the Purandar fort against Mirza Raja Jai Singh and Diler Khan a Mughal general who accompanied Jai Singh in the 17th Century.

Murar Baji was born in Javali in Satara district. His father was a servant of Chanderrao More. Later in the seine of Chandrarao, he moved to Mahad. He fought very bravely against Shivaji Bhosale to protect the Mores to whom he was loyal. Such braveness was noticed by Shivaji and he thought that Murarbaji should be in our army. He joined army of swarajya in 1656. He soon he became known as the loyal Sardar of Shivaji and was awarded the title of 'Killedar' of Purandar.

The battle of Purandar was a landmark of symbolic importance for both the Maratha and Mughals. It was essential for the Marathas to hold of the Mughals for as long as possible. Thus demonstrating difficulty of conquering the mountain Deccan Kingdom. It was equally imperative for Mughals to conquer Purandar as swiftly as possible to demonstrate the futility of resistance of mighty Mughal Empire. In the end European Cannon fielded by the Mughals, under the leadership of the European Mercenary Mannuchi blasted away the walls of Purandar. In spite of crumbling defences Murar Baji and his troops sustained a dogged defense when the Mughal breached the outer walls Murar Baji and his soldiers thought over whelming out numbered. Mounted a fence counter attack Maratha folk history has it that Murarbaji showed incredible skills as a sword man and was a aggressive and inspiring leader who pushed back and inspiring leader who pushed back and caused retreat of large Mughal force. Diler Khan impressed with the bravery of Murar Baji offered him a truce and employment in Mughal force hand some salary. Murar Baji turned down the offer due to his loyalty to the ideas of Hindvi Swarajya. He extremely enraged at this suggestion and in an act of extreme daredevilry charge with his commandos right in to the heart of Mughal troops, Killing hundreds. The remaining Marathas retreated inside the inner walls of the fort, refusing to surrender and willing to fight to the last man.

The battle of Purandar showed the Marathas the difficulty in facing the over whelming force lead by Mirza Raja Jai Singh and revealed to the Mughal the indomitable spirit and tenacity of Marathas. Therefore Shivaji agreed to surrender to Mirza Raja rather than risk and decimation of his force and rain of his home and as a part of the settlement Shivaji agreed to give 23 of his fort and 4,00,000/- rupees to the Mughals. He also agreed to let his son Sambhaji became a Mughal Sardar and Serve the Mughal court of Aurangzeb.

Chhatrapati Shivaji fought first battle for swarajya

under the leadership of Veer Baji Pasalkar in Belsar near Saswad. Sardar Godaji Jagtap was shown his gallantry in the Belsar battle, Purandar taluka is very close to Pune therefore it had a special importance from the Maratha period.

Revolt of Ramoshies under the Leadership of Umaji Naik :

Umaji Naik was born in the year AD 1791at the small village of Bhiwadi two miles north east of from the Purandar fort in Purandar taluka. His father Dadaji Naik died at an advance age on the Purandar fort in 1807. Dadaji was father of large family; having been twice married Umaji was third child of second wife. He was slight made man, about five feet four inches in heights, with large dark searching and expressing eyes a large nose deeply set under the blows; he had a very fine throat and his skin was copper colour Umaji lived with his mother after Ramoshies were expelled from Purandar and deprived of their land, paymod emoluments by order of the Peshwa Bajirao, in conquence of having obsnately refused to deliver up the fort to his authority, upon return to Pune from Bassein, in May 1803.

In the course of a few years after the above mentioned period, a number of Ramoshies who had been engaged in various disturbance and outrages, fled their families to east ward to evade the Peshwas troops and obtained Shelter in the village of the Nizams dominios around Paranda (Now in Usmanabad district) Umaji and his cousin raghoo and other Ramoshies were joined in the service of Mahommeden Fukeer Inamdar. But due to the dispute between fakur's wife and Ramoshies were discharge from the service Umaji and his associate came to the native place Purandar, he became a chief of his Ramoshi gang.

After six months British took possession of the Pune territory, a banker of Pune dispatched same property to Bombay. Under the leadership of Sattu Naik of Saswad, accompanied by Umaji proceeded with the required rapidity to Khalapur eighteen miles from Panvel, where they wanted the approach of the party hitch they attacked and carried out the property. The collector received same hints from the person supposed to have committed the robbery and Umaji and three other were apprehended. They here tried and prove guilty to having been engaged in the robbery, and were sentenced to receive a certain number of strips and to be imprisoned for one year. Umaji and his Ramoshies given trouble to the British government. They occasionally committed robberies and by the end of the year 1823, their party consisted Ten Ramoshies Umaji and his associates looted British Government treasury in Pune on 24 of Feb. 1824. Around the Purandar fort Saswad, Sakurde, Jejuri, Pune, Belsar were main center of the Umajis revolt against British. Umaji Naik became strong enemy before British Government. The people of Chhatrapati of Satara, Pantsachive (Sansthanik) of Bhor were supported to Umajis revolt against British.

Umaji want to be establishment of his own state with the help of Bhujaji Naik his close associate. He declared his manifesto about tax collection of the village. Around the Purandar forts Patils and Kulkarnis given the collection of money to the gang of Umaji Naik. British Government declared big prize for capturing Umaji and his associate Rs. 5000/- and government service for help of government.

The British government founded three detachments for the Umaji, but never captured. British were appointed special officer, Cap. Linigstone, Capt. Luken and Captain Alexander Mackintosh was main officer against Umaji. Umaji Naik became popular among the people, but for the government he became headache. Lastly Umaji captured by

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the British with the help of his associate in Utroli village near Bhor in December 1831 and on 3rd Feb. 1832 Umaji Naik was hanged in courtyard of Tashildar office in Pune.

Historical Monuments in Purandar Taluka :

Saswad is a taluka town 33 kms south of Pune at the foothills of the Purandar fort. It is located on the bank of Karha river. Saswad is well known historical city in Pune district. Many of the historical monuments located in Saswad.

Samadhi of Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath :

Peshwa Balaji Vishwnath Bhat (1680 – 1719) was born in to Chitpawan Brahmin family in Shrivardhan in Konkan region. Balaji begin his career as an accountant for a Maratha general Dhanaji Jadhav at Janjira between 1699 and 1703, he served as the Sar-Subhedar or head Administrator at Pune. By the time Dhanaji died Balaji proven himself as an honest and able officer Chhatrapati Shahu ruler of Marathas took note of his abilities and appointed Balaji as his assistant. In the next few years Balaji by his tactful negotiation became a prominent personality. He recorded as having participated in the invasion (1708) of the Mughal city of Ahmadabad. Again the Maratha civil war (1707 – 13) which followed the release of Shahu from Mughal captivity, the Maratha general Chandrasen Jadhav a prominent partisan of the Tarabai faction (opposed to Shahu) ravaged the southern district of the state. He was defeated by Balaji after a prolonged engagement. In 1713, Shahu faced personal danger when he was attacked at Khed near Satara by force loyal to Tarabai. At this critical juncture Shahuji turn to Balaji and appointed him 'Senakarte' (Army Commander) and gave him full authority to wage the battle that had become unavoidable.

This increased the confidence that Shahu had in Balaji was appointed as Shahu's plenipotentiary to negotiate with Kanhoji Angre, Admiral of Maratha Navy. Who was allied with Tarabai. Before Balaji took up his assignment, he requested Shahu to appoint him Peshwa or prime minister. Shahu conceded his request and on November 16, 1713 Balaji became Shahu's first Prime Minister / Peshwa. Kanhoji Angre agreed to become the Sarkhel (Admiral) of Shahu's navy.

There existed a power vacuum in Mughal Empire, caused by the death of Aurangzeb in 1707. Subsequently intense conflict within imperial family and civil war. Farrukhsiyar came to the throne in 1713 with the help of Sayyad brothers who had turned kingmaker in the anarchy following the death of Aurangzeb difference soon arose between them and the emperor.

In 1716 Shahu's army Chief Dhanaji Thorat arrested Balaji. The reason for this two year imprisonment is unknown. After his release as directed by Shahu in 1718 Balaji negotiated a treaty with Sayyad brothers, which the Mughal emperor later refused to ratify. With the help of Maratha troop commanded by the gallant Parsoji Bhosale, Husain Ali, Marched on Delhi, de throned Farrukhsiyar and substituted in his place a more pliable puppet Rafi-ul-darjat in February 1719. The Marathas also supplied a 15000 strong army to enforce the Mughal empire's authority in Deccan. In exchange for the help thus rendered to Husain Ali, Balaji extracted a formal recognition of autonomy of the Marathas in the territories held by them and the right to collect chauth, Sardeshmukhi in the six Deccan provinces. After 1719 he moved to Saswad, after a pilgrimage of Kashi in his advancing years the great Peshwa passed away on 2nd April 1720, at Saswad. His Samadhi built at the confluence of Karha and Chambli river.

Mastani mahal :

Mastani mahal was built by Peshwa Bajirao – I , on the bank of Karha river in Saswad, for his lovely second wife Mastani. She was a daughter of Raja Chhatrasal of Bundel Khand. Long time Mastani is lived in the Mahal. Woods, stones and iron were used for the building and having the shape of square. During the British period the parts of the Mahals were burnt by British troops. Now Tashildar's office shifted in to the Mastani Mahal by the state government.

Purandarewada (Fortress):

Purandarewada (Fortress) was built by Sardar Ambaji Purandare who was deewan of Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath. The Purandarewada is oldest standing structure in Maharashtra, not unlike small Shinvarwada. Sardar Ambaji Purandare built this imposing and grand residence supposedly in 1710. Intricate wooden carving and wall frescoes are said to still adorn this magnificent fortress. Attached Ganesh temple north of eastern wall. This wada like the Shanivarwada had a smaller yet strongly built gate house. The gate house had giant doors with sharp steel spikes and steel strips bolted with sharpened cone head steel bolts. The keep bastion flanking the gate house as well as most of the outer wall had arrow – loops and machicolation chutes to pour hot liquid on to offending raiders. Now this fortress belongs to Jaisaheb Purandare descendent of Sardar Purandare.

It is well said that every inch of Purandar taluka soil has a chapter of history. Purandar fort, Sonori fort, (Malhargad) Khandoba Temple (Jejuri), Bhuleshwar Temple (Malshiras), Jadhavgadi (Fortress), Sangameshwar Temple, Sant Sopankaka Samadhi, Changavateshwar Temple, Pandeshwar Temple, Mastani Lake (Dive), Narayanehwar Temple, Umaji Naik National Memorial, Well known Kanifnathgad and Sardar Purandarewada these are the main historical monuments spread in the Purandar Taluka, Kunjrwada (fortress) is very famous fortress in Saswad it is located close to Purandarewada.

Many historical events occurred on Purandar soil. Chhatrapati Sambhaji, Peshwa Savai Madhavrao were born on this soil (Purandar fort). Peshwa Balaji Bhat, Sardar Bhivrao Panse, Krantiveer Lahuji Salave, Veer Baji Pasalkar, Umaji Naik, Sardar Godaji Jagtap, Murarbaji Deshpande. Shown their gallantry around Purandar. Well known social reformer Mahatma Jyotiba Phule's native place Khanvadi is in Purandar taluka. Mahatma Phule began first school for untouchable and women in India. He established 'Satyashodak Samaj' for enlightenment of dispread class. He strongly opposed to social and religious hierarchy. First Indian lady teacher Savitribai Phule was his wife. In Indian independent movement many of Gandhians were participated. Saswad Ashram Trust was main center of freedom fighter, Prematai Katak was lead that movement, who was long associated with Mahatma Gandhi. After Indian Independence Purandar became famous in entire Maharashtra. Saswad (Purandar) was native place of Achyraya Prahlad Keshav Atre. Who lead Samyukta Maharashtra movement.

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